

Hillandale

News

No 220 February 1998



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Hillandale News

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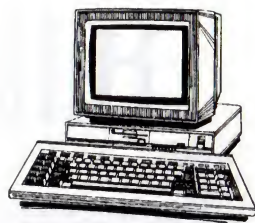
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Front cover illustration: Catherine Mentiplay (Contralto).

See Robert Rankine's article on page 443.

EDITOR'S DESK



Changes

At the Annual General Meeting last October George Frow announced that he had decided to retire as President of our Society. He has given many years of sterling service to the Society and our hobby in general. His books on Edison's cylinder and disc phonographs are the standard reference works on that subject. In recognition of this the Committee has asked George to become a co-patron of the Society. This honour has been accepted by George.

Mike Field was elected at the same meeting to succeed George as President of the Society. Mike has also given a lot of service to the Society. For some years he was Hon.Treasurer; he has contributed many excellent articles on machines to the pages of *Hillandale News* and he has helped many a member with advice on restoring their machines. We wish him well in his new post.

The current style of *Hillandale News* has been in place for around five years and the time has come to make changes. The next issue will be the first of a new style and it will contain full details of the changes. We hope they will give the magazine a more attractive look and make it an better read. We also hope to give you more variety of content and increased value for your money. However we are still short of articles relating to machines and would welcome contributions from readers.

We would remind those wishing to attend the London meetings that the venue has had to be changed for the next few months due to reconstruction work on the buildings at the Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church. The new venue from this month will be the **Wynter Room** at the **Swedenborg Society, Swedenborg House, 20-21 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2TH.**

Please note that material intended for inclusion in *Hillandale News* must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.**

Hence the deadline for the **April 1998** issue will be **15th February 1998.**

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Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor.

CATHERINE MENTIPLAY - A PROFILE

by Robert Rankine

Introduction

In the August 1997 issue of *Hillandale News* Peter Cliffe requested information about the contralto Catherine Mentiplay and, in the October issue, Ewan Langford wrote to tell us that on New Year's day 1916 Catherine Mentiplay sang in an Edinburgh performance of *The Messiah*. We also know that in 1923 Catherine Mentiplay recorded for HMV: my own interest is that I own a copy of the second of the two early Mentiplay HMV recordings mentioned by Peter Cliffe. Using these slender leads I set out to find more about this Contralto. Various Scottish reference sources were consulted with no result and so I resorted to calling up those Mentiplay's listed in the telephone directory. I quickly located Catherine Mentiplay's nephew who told me that his late Aunt Kate's daughter lived just six miles down river from my own home in Alloa! Since then I have spent some happy hours reminiscing with Mrs Catherine Chambers, an accomplished musician, and I am pleased to offer Peter Cliffe, and other readers of *Hillandale News*, a factual account of these pleasant conversations which are not solely about Catherine Mentiplay, but give, too, a fascinating insight to a part of Edinburgh's musical past.

Biography - Catherine Mentiplay: born at Bank Street, Addiewell, West Lothian 15th June 1886, daughter of David Mentiplay and his wife Catherine (née Calder). Married Thomas Paterson Lamb¹ (b.1881 - d.1959) on 22nd July 1916 at St Serf's Parish Church, Ferry Road, Leith. They had one child Catherine Paterson Lamb (now Mrs Chambers). Catherine Mentiplay died at Falkirk, Stirlingshire on 17th July 1965

Catherine Mentiplay's father, was employed as foreman by James "Paraffin" Young of shale oil refining fame, and was also precentor to the United Presbyterian Church congregation at West Calder. With instrumental accompaniment proscribed, the early Scottish Presbyterian church sang the metrical psalms unaccompanied thus creating a need for an 'up-taker of the psalm' (or precentor). As we may imagine, leading unaccompanied singing was no mean feat in those days of large congregations but, by the mid-19th century, it had developed into a fine art² with the precentor usually possessed of a clear tenor voice *full and resonant enough to make itself heard over the efforts of the congregation*. Despite many distractions, a talented precentor would keep true pitch, and in tune, throughout the psalm. Proof that David Mentiplay provided a much appreciated service to the West Calder congregation is inscribed on a brooch presented to his wife and now treasured by Mrs Chambers.

It is possible that Catherine Mentiplay inherited her fine singing voice from her father and we may assume that he would be her first singing teacher. Sadly he died whilst still a young man and the family moved to Henderson Row, Edinburgh. Always interested in music the 12-year-old Catherine was so enchanted by a folk-song which a visiting lecturer to Stockbridge School taught her class, that she wrote to him requesting a copy. This lecturer, Frank Sharp, replied in a charming letter with the words and, in *sol-fa* notation, the music, of a song *A Frog went out one day...* His letter, illustrated with line sketches of the animals characterised in the song, is signed with the musical signature F#.



John Tainsh, Catherine Mentiplay (at piano), Marie Thomson and unknown bass.

Catherine Mentiplay studied singing with Arthur C. Young, Edinburgh and it was at his singing classes that she met her future husband Thomas Paterson Lamb, who at that time was Young's accompanist. The Lambs lived firstly at 20, and later at 25, Pitt Street³, Edinburgh. Catherine Mentiplay taught singing throughout her career and shared studios above Methven Simpson's music shop at 83, Prince's Street, with her husband T. Paterson Lamb, who gave piano lessons. Her friend, the soprano Marie Thomson⁴, taught singing in an adjacent studio.

Catherine Mentiplay's debut was given on Wednesday 4th December 1912 in the Freemason's Hall, 98 George Street, Edinburgh with T. Paterson Lamb as accompanist. A surviving programme shows that the recital included:

Saint-Saëns:	<i>O Love! from thy pow'r</i> (Samson and Delilah)
Schumann:	<i>Now to adorn me</i>
Leoni:	<i>When he comes home</i>
Henschel:	<i>Morning Hymn</i>
Schubert:	<i>Aufenthalt</i>
Brahms	<i>Sappische Ode</i>
Wolf	<i>Du bist so jung</i>
Schubert	<i>Auf dem Wasser zu singen</i>
Tchaikowsky	<i>The Pilgrim's Song</i>
Alves	<i>Lullaby</i> (Song of Burma)
Alves	<i>The Loom</i> (Song of Burma)
Graham Peel	<i>Invitation to arise</i>
Scots Trad.	<i>Burd Ailie</i> (arr. Drysdale)
	<i>A Highland Lad</i> (arr. MacPherson)

This ambitious programme won approval. *"Miss Catherine Mentiplay's performance was of a very high order. Her voice has a beautiful rich quality, and there is a sureness and polish about her work that is very gratifying..."*

Catherine Mentiplay's repertoire included oratorio (*Messiah; Elijah, Samson*, etc.), Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Beethoven's *Symphony No 9* (The Choral), and she also sang the Angel in Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*. She sang many classical programmes including Schubert lieder and also programmes of traditional Scottish songs. Newspaper critics of the time tell us that at a recital *"Miss Catherine Mentiplay, Contralto, was rapturously received..."*

Catherine Mentiplay was contralto soloist with the Edinburgh Choral Union on many occasions between 1916 and 1942 sharing the platform with sopranos such as Isobel Baillie and Elsie Suddaby. A press review of a performance of *The Messiah* tells us that *"Miss Catherine Mentiplay quickly showed that she possessed a rich voice which she knew how to use. In the air 'O thou that tellest' it was at once evident that hers was no ordinary voice. There was a smoothness and beauty about it that compelled attention, and this was accentuated in her rendering of 'He shall feed his flock..."*

She sang in a quartet, the *Edinburgh Singers*, with John Tainsh (tenor), Marie Thomson (soprano) and Dudley Stuart White (baritone). For some years before the 1939 war, this quartet gave regular Thursday afternoon broadcasts for the BBC. For many years Catherine Mentiplay was principal contralto with BBC Scottish Singers and with the St Serf's Parish Church Choir. She was a friend and, at Pitt Street, neighbour of the late Dr Ian Whyte, (b.1901 - d.1960) conductor of the BBC Scottish Orchestra, and Catherine Mentiplay sang many of Whyte's compositions and arrangements. The Paterson Lambs were professional acquaintances of Sir Donald Tovey (b.1875 - d.1940), Reid Professor of Music at Edinburgh University, who came to tea when there was a programme to discuss.

Apart from public concerts and recitals Catherine Mentiplay was in demand privately for in December 1930 she, with her husband, stayed as house guests of the artist Sir D Y Cameron (b.1865 - d.1945), and Lady Cameron, at Kippen. At a Christmas Nativity Play in the church there she sang *Slumber, beloved* (No 19) from Bach's Christmas Oratorio and other seasonal music. The play was produced and dressed by Lady Cameron.

In the music room at Marchmont House⁵, Greenlaw, the home of Sir John McEwan, MP.⁶ Catherine Mentiplay sang a programme of Scottish songs, and her husband played the pipe-organ, for a party of French guests. A song *The Rover of Loch Ryan* ⁷ which was written by Sir John's father, was sung by Catherine Mentiplay during a BBC recital. Just before the broadcast Sir John, who was attending the "House", sent Catherine Mentiplay a telegram reading *"Good luck with the Rover"*.

During the 1939-45 war Catherine Mentiplay sang in lunch hour concerts at the National Gallery of Scotland. A typical National Gallery lunch time concert was advertised thus:

Concerts and Recitals

LUNCH HOUR CONCERTS.

National Gallery of Scotland, the Mound,
Wednesday December 3rd 1941 1 - 2.15pm.

SALON ORCHESTRA

directed by Robert C Howells, Mus. Bac.

CATHERINE MENTIPLAY, Contralto,

in works by Bach, Gluck, Schubert

songs by Elgar, Parry, Lamb. etc.

A press report said that *"...she possesses a rich voice of remarkable power and beauty..."*

Catherine Mentiplay also sang at the famous "Nelson Hall" concerts. Inaugurated in 1901, these concerts, held in Edinburgh public libraries at Dalry Road, Dundee Street and Hamilton Place, provided music for working people and are yet carried on by the Edinburgh City Libraries. During the 1939 war she sang throughout Scotland for CEMA⁸ (the forerunner of the Arts Council). She frequently broadcast for the BBC on home and overseas services including broadcasts to Australia. Mrs Chambers can remember accompanying her mother to the BBC studio in Queen Street, Edinburgh and travelling with her mother and father to the BBC studio in Glasgow where Catherine Mentiplay made numerous war time broadcasts.

During an early BBC broadcast Catherine Mentiplay sang an arrangement of the folk-song *Burd Ailie* which was heard by Miss J. C. Drysdale of "The Henel", Traquair. Miss Drysdale was moved to recognise her late brother's arrangement of this song and wrote thanking Catherine for including it in the broadcast, and so began their friendship.

Just before the war Miss Drysdale invited a party of guests to climb to a cairn on a hill behind "The Henel" to witness Sir Dan Godfrey (b.1868 - d.1939), founder and conductor of The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, unveil a plaque to the memory of her brother Learmont Drysdale⁹, a promising young composer who had tragically died some years earlier. During this ceremony amidst the rolling Border hills Catherine Mentiplay sang, unaccompanied, Learmont's setting of the song *Burd Ailie*.

"Burd Ailie sat down by the wimplin' burn,
Wi' the red, red rose in her hair..."

(Burd Ailie = Burd, bird or Young Woman; Ailie, diminutive for Aileen).

Catherine Mentiplay and her husband were keen golfers at Duddingston Golf Course. Their favoured holiday haunts were Heanish on the Hebridean Isle of Tiree (with golf at Scarinish), and in the Scottish Borders.

An interesting fact for *Hillandale News* readers is that, as all three members of the Paterson Lamb family were talented and practising musicians, they had no need of a gramophone, and therefore did not possess copies of Catherine Mentiplay's recordings.

During 1964 Catherine Mentiplay moved to Kincardine-on-Forth, Fife, to be with her widowed daughter; she became ill on 17th July 1965 and died later that day in a hospital in Falkirk. She is survived by her daughter, Mrs Catherine Chambers, two grand-children and several great-grand children.

Discography:

Catherine Mentiplay with piano accompaniment by Madame Adami:*

19th September 1923, recorded for HMV at Hayes, Middlesex:

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------|---|
| Bb 3471 - 1 | HMV B1823 | <i>Caller Herrin'</i> (Lady Nairn, trad.) |
| Bb 3472 - 2 | HMV B1823 | <i>The Flowers O' the Forest</i> (arr. Moffat) |
| Bb 3468 - 2 | HMV B1824 | <i>The Rowan Tree</i> |
| | | (Lady Nairn: Trad. arr. Adam Hamilton) |
| Bb 3469 - 1 | HMV B1824 | <i>A Highland Lad My Love Was Born</i> |
| | | (arr. MacPherson) |
| Bb 3477 - 1 | HMV B1825 | <i>Row weel my boatie</i> ^A (Trad. arr. Finlay Dun)+ |
| Bb 3479 - 1 | HMV B1825 | <i>The Keel Row</i> (arr. Patterson Cross)+ |
| | | + with Marie Thomson |

*The recording sheet for this 1923 session could not be located in the EMI Archive

^The song is *The Boatie Rows*, the author John Ewan; one of the verses establishes for us that the scene is by the Firth of Forth:

I cuist my line in Largo Bay
and fishes I got nine.
Three to roast and three to boil
and three to bait my line.*

* cuist = cast

7th October 1929 HMV Mobile Recording Van in Glasgow:

Catherine Mentiplay, Contralto. Piano accomp. by Mr Lamb.

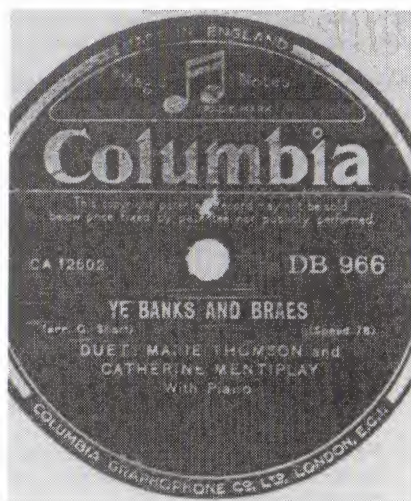
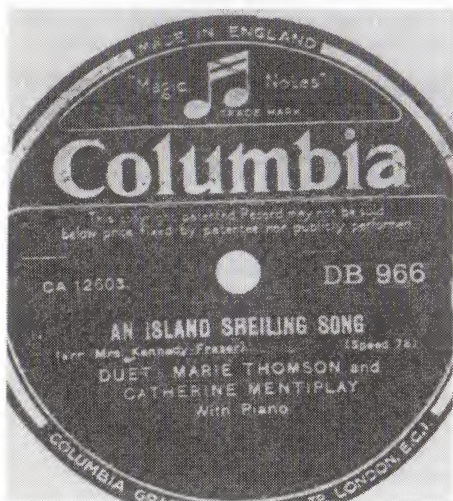
BR 2652	<i>O Sing to me the Auld Scotch Sangs</i> (Lesson)
BR 2653	<i>A Highland Lad My Love Was Born</i>
	(arr. MacPherson)
BR 2654	<i>Ye Banks and Braes</i> (Burns: Trad. arr Moffat)
BR 2655	<i>Flowers of the Forest</i> (arr Moffat)

(These recordings were not published)

Duets by Marie Thomson and **Catherine Mentiplay**, with piano accomp.

Recorded by EMI 19th April 1932 and published by Columbia in November 1932.

CA 12602	Columbia DB966*	<i>Ye banks and braes</i> (Burns: Trad. arr. Short)
CA 12603	Columbia DB966	<i>An Island Shieling Song</i>
		(<i>Songs of the Hebrides</i> arr. Kennedy Fraser).



CA 12604 -1 Columbia DB967# *Keel Row* (arr. Patterson Cross)

CA 12605 -1 Columbia DB967 *Roy's Wife O' Aldivalloch*. (arr. J Gray).

The record label spelling "Alldivalloch" is wrong. The song is from *The Vocal melodies of Scotland* edited by Finlay Dun and John Thomson. The tune is strong, Scottish, and employs the typical "Scotch snap".

* issued November 1932 deleted February 1943

issued November 1932 deleted January 1939

Notes:

Catherine Mentiplay was contralto soloist with the Edinburgh Choral Union for the following performances:

- 1916 January 1st *The Messiah* with Caroline Hatchard, John Harrison and Frederic Austin.
January 1st Evening concert with above artists.
- 1917 February 28th *Elijah* with Lilian Stiles-Allen, A. E. Benson, Herbert Brown
- 1918 March 29th *The Messiah* with Alice Cleugh, James Newall, Alexander Richard.
- 1921 April 3rd *The Messiah* with Caroline Hatchard, Wilson Thornton, Herbert Brown.
- 1921 December 31st *Ballad Concert* with Caroline Hatchard, Arthur Jordan, Philip Malcolm.
- 1922 April 14th *Elijah* with Lilian Stiles-Allen, John Adams, Philip Malcolm.
- 1923 November 14th *Samson* (selections) etc. with Heggie Thomson, D. S. Forsyth.
- 1924 January 1st *The Messiah* with Elsie Suddaby, Arthur Jordan and Horace Stevens. January 1st Evening concert with above artists.
- 1928 January 1st *The Messiah* with Isobel Baillie, Steuart Wilson, Harold Williams. January 1st Evening concert with above artists.
- 1929 March 27th *St Matthew Passion* with Steuart Wilson, Herbert Heyner, Cathie Mawer
- 1929 May 26th *The Messiah* with Isobel Baillie, Herbert Thorpe, Philip Malcolm
- 1932 December 25th *The Messiah* and *Christmas Oratorio* (in St Giles Cathedral) with Marie Thomson, Bruce Flegg, Horace Stevens.
- 1933 February 6th Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* (No 9) with Marie Thomson, Charles Brown and Stuart Robertson.
- 1934 March 14th *Elijah* with Janette Sclanders, Charles Brown, Dennis Noble.
- 1941 May 21st *The Messiah* with Jean Summers, John Tainsh, John Mathewson.
- 1942 May 23rd *The Messiah* with Janette Sclanders, Charles Brown, Alexander Carmichael.

- 1) Thomas Paterson Lamb (b.1880 - d.1959), husband of Catherine Mentiplay, was for forty years organist and choirmaster at St Serf's Parish Church, Ferry Road, Leith. He was also organist to the Grand Lodge of Scotland and Choir-master of the Edinburgh Police Male Voice Choir, Linlithgow Ladies Choir and choirs at Duns and Ayton in Berwickshire. He taught music at Berwickshire High School, Duns. He was his wife's piano accompanist throughout her professional career, and, for many years, accompanist to Edinburgh Opera Company and to the Edinburgh Competitive Music Festivals
- 2) Three outstanding Edinburgh precentors, John Templeton, John Wilson and David Kennedy, went on to become singers of note and are commemorated together on a bronze plaque on the rock of the Calton Hill above Waterloo Place. (David Kennedy was the father of the more famous Marjory Kennedy-Fraser (b.1857- d.1930). *Hillandale News* readers may be interested to know that in the 1930's the Greenock Gaelic Church Choir, led by its precentor, recorded eight metrical psalms on four Beltona records. These well illustrate unaccompanied congregational singing led by an able precentor 'singing the line'.
- 3) Pitt Street, Edinburgh was that part of Dundas Street between Great King Street and Henderson Row. The thoroughfare is now Dundas Street all the way from Heriot Row to Henderson Row.
- 4) Marie Thomson, soprano, colleague of Catherine Mentiplay. She studied the *Songs of the Hebrides* with Marjory Kennedy-Fraser. Married John Tainsh, tenor. All three (Catherine Mentiplay, Marie Thomson and John Tainsh) sang together with the Edinburgh Singers (or Quartet) and they each sang frequently as soloists with the Edinburgh Choral Union and elsewhere.

- 5) Marchmont House (1750) attributed to William Adam, between Greenlaw and Duns, now a Sue Ryder Home. In 1913-20 Sir Robert Lorimer added a music room in which was installed, in 1917, a pipe-organ with thirty-five speaking stops three manuals and pedals built by *William Hill & Son, and Norman & Beard*.
- 6) Sir John McEwan, MP (b.1894-d.1962) Member for Berwickshire and Haddington, Poet; Diplomat; Trustee for National Gallery of Scotland; Chairman, Scottish Arts Council; Saltire Society etc.
- 7) *The Rover of Loch Ryan* - sobriquet given to Rear Admiral Sir John Ross, KGB (b.1777-d.1856) adventurer and explorer who, in 1817, headed an Admiralty expedition to Baffin Bay and inquiring into the possibility of there being a North-West passage; in 1829 he headed another expedition in search of a North-West passage, which after a four-year fight for survival, ended in Ross' triumphant return to England.
- 8) CEMA stood for "Council for Encouragement of Music and the Arts"; later renamed the "Arts Council".
- 9) G. J. Learmont Drysdale (b.1866 - d.1909) gave organ recitals at the Edinburgh International Exhibition in 1886. To enable him to study at RAM he moved south to become sub-organist at All Saints, South Kensington. He was composer of some fine work which is now neglected; many of his compositions were first performed at the Crystal Palace under Sir August Manns (b.1825 - d.1907).

Bibliography:

Mentiplay - First Song Recital Programme 1912.

Mentiplay - promotion leaflet (with photograph) c.1920.

The Scotsman (Newspaper) - recital and concert reviews - various issues from 1912.

The Centenary of The Edinburgh Royal Choral Union, Constable 1958.

Stewart: *An Interim Inventory of Scottish Organs*, Edinburgh 1985.

Hillandale News No 217 August 1997 (letters - page 348).

Hillandale News No 218 October 1997 (letters - page 388).

This profile written with the kind help and co-operation of the late Catherine Mentiplay's daughter, Mrs Catherine Chambers.

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WE ALSO HAVE OUR OWN RECORDS

Part 5

by Frank Andrews

In my programme presented to the Society in 1992 I concerned myself with labels and/or the proprietors of discs, commencing with the letter "A". These were associated with businesses which did actually make their own disc records although some may have arranged for special recordings relevant to their respective enterprises.

My programme closed with some labels beginning with the letter "B". Blue Rhapsody Records was the last label mentioned. For my next programme continuing the same theme, in 1993, I had a few more labels to mention which have should have been included in my 1992 programme. The first of these was for the proprietors of the Associated British Cinemas. This was HMV JH76, which carried the *A. B. C. Minors Own Song* which had a lyric put to the trio section Abe Holzman's march *Blaze Away*. The reverse carried the *Happy Birthday to You* anniversary song. It is almost certain that every ABC Cinema which offered Children's matinee film shows carried at least one copy of this disc.

Another "A" disc was also an HMV and was JH78, which had been manufactured for the **American Red Cross Society**, which probably ministered to American servicemen in this country and other parts of Europe. The two titles were *Anniversary Donut* and *If you want a Cup of Coffee*. The disc may have been on sale as a fund raiser, through the Red Cross.

Bahram was the first of my additional "B" records. This was a Horse race gambling disc similar to the **Magi-Trak Record** which is often found by collectors. Bahram was the name of a horse owner by the Aga Khan, a classic winner in 1935. On the disc it had been given odds of 3 to 1. Eight other

named horses, on of the named labels, were given odds between 5 to 1 and 20 to 1. The reverse label simply had **BAHRAM** round the upper part of the label. Looking at one of my transparencies again, which I had from our late lamented Len Watts, it does appear to me as if this may have been a 7" microgroove disc, and as such should not have been included in my programme. The manufacturers were Dean of Warehouse Court, London W.1. There was no catalogue number associated with this disc.

"With the Compliments of Baldwin Chemical Industries Ltd." had an apple-green and dark green label, no catalogue number and Harry Fryer & His Orchestra playing *Begin the Beguine*. I do not know what was on the reverse. Len Watts had only photographed one side! I do not know of Harry Fryer having recorded before 1943, the year in which he appeared on some of the Decca Record Co.'s *Music While You Work* series.

Baldwin Chemical Industries Ltd., was founded in 1949. I do not know if it was a new business or a conversion from a private company into a limited company. It was struck from Companies House Register on May 28th 1957. The disc was probably of the acetate type as the label recommended that trailer needles should be used. I cannot say who made the disc.

The Belchers Club. This I know nothing about, and there are going to be quite a few labels about which I've been unable to find any background information, but they will be mentioned. The title simply says "Record No.1", again I have only one of its labels by permission of Len Watts, which was in pale blue and brown. Did performers belch out a tune?



Blue Seal Records, as far as I am aware, came only in the 10" size. They were the property of Mr W. F. Sykes, a Gramophone Society founder and talking machines and records dealer at the Arcade Emporium, in Northampton. Thomas A. Edison was a member and a Patron of the Northants Society.

The words "The Blue Seal of Quality" were printed on a sticker label, applied to various makes of records. I do not know if any Blue Seal Records ever had a whole label either as a sticker or even pressed with the discs. The stickers have been applied to the Pioneer Records introduced by Blume & Co.Ltd. in February 1914 at 1s.6d. each but subsequently reduced to 1s. 0d each in the following November. They have also been seen applied to the **Coliseum Records** of Cooper Bros., later as Wm. Cooper Bros. Ltd, from October 1914.

The earliest mention of Blue Seal Records which I have come across, was in a trade paper of January 1915 wherein they were described as "The latest Gramophone Record with every title stocked". They were priced at one shilling each. A complete catalogue was available upon application to W. F. Sykes at his Northampton address. It may be of significance that the Pioneer Records had their last advertisement in November 1914 in the trade press, when at only one shilling each. Could it be that Sykes had purchased the whole stock and overstocked the labels with his stickers? There is a reference, in 1915, of Woolworth's selling Pioneers at 6d. each.

I have no idea for how long Sykes kept his "Blue Seals" going. The overstocked Coliseum Records may have been old stock, or he could have simply have overstocked new issues which he stocked. Coliseums were then priced at 1s. 6d. each. My first demonstrated record was a Coliseum Record, which was first on sale in June 1912 (it was already a stencilled disc as it came from Beka Grand Record masters). The artist was Robert Ward on Blue Seal

/Coliseum Cat.No, 138, who had been Max Witte on the Beka Grand Record, but who was actually W. W. Whitlock, the frequently recorded bells, tubaphone and xylophone virtuoso player. It is well to point out that the two pseudonyms were also used for Albert Müller, Billy Whitlock's German contemporary. The piece I played was *Go as you Please* a polka by Fahrback, arranged for the xylophone, either by Whitlock or William Ditcham. Any other overstock labels?

Blue Star - Serie Gotham. There were various Blue Star labels, and the repertoire on all that I am aware of were of music played by foremost jazz musicians. I am not a jazz buff myself so those of you who are will know more about this label than I do. My first example shown had a blue label, with catalogue number prefixed B.S., a blue star being prominent above the spindle hole. The transparency was by courtesy of Len Watts. The record was made in France. There is no mention of Norman Granz on this label.

Norman Granz was an American impresario who used to contract leading jazz musicians to perform at his promotions which he presented as "Jazz at the Philharmonic". They were held at a number of venues in the U.S.A. and in Europe, including Great Britain.

My second Blue Star label has a blue label, printed white, has no star but does depict a red-jacketed saxophone player, on the left-hand side. This had a plain catalogue number, No.133, which on the "a" side bore a "Manor Master" recording, matrix P. 7.114. This too was "Made in France" and it, too, does not mention Norman Granz, but my third example did, for the label was **Blue Star Norman Granz Jazz**. The label was silver with printing in blue and in white with a red-jacketed trumpet player depicted on the left. The side screened stated, "Under the personal supervision of Norman Granz" and the catalogue no. had an "N.G" prefix. The matrix was another prefixed with a P, in this instance P. 19.726. Again this disc was



made in France. All three labels shown were in English.

The label with the red-jacketed trumpet player was a British registered trade mark, which belonged to Norman Granz, and it also appeared on the Columbia "Clef" series, which had its first issues in August 1955, although on Columbias it appears that the red jacket had lost some of its intense colour in the wash. The Columbia Clefs also stated, "Under the personal supervision of Norman Granz".

I have no data to confirm that Norman Granz had any connection with the first two Blue Star labels aforementioned. No record was demonstrated as I only had Len Watts transparencies to work from.

Bob-o-Link records were 7" diameter double-sided discs and were the property, at first of the A. G. Gilbert Company of New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A. In October 1921, in America, this company advertised a small children's pedestal gramophone - not a toy - which was able to play discs up to eight inches in diameter. With the machine were advertised 7" Bob-o-Link records in four Bob-o-Link books (two discs to a book). Two books were reading books and the other two were singing books. All four books carried illustrations by the graphic artist Willy Pogany and the talking records had been recorded by Maud and Miska Petersham. The songs had been recorded by the well-known American singer Charles W. Harrison (tenor). The books cost 1 dollar each (about 5s.0d.) and carried 16 pages 11" x 16".

In February 1922 it was reported that the A. G. Gilbert Company had disposed of its business to the La Velle Manufacturing Company also of New Haven, with which a Mr F. W. Gilbert was the treasurer and the President.

The records in the U.S.A. up to this juncture had been styled "Gilbert - Bob-o-Link" with a

depiction of the Bob-o-Link species of bird, set in the middle "O". The labels had been green and gold (perhaps other colours?). Whether or not there was a change in label name and colours under the new proprietors, I know not. By May 1922 there were two models of the Bob-o-Link machines, one priced at ten dollars, and a further book was on offer containing musical games.

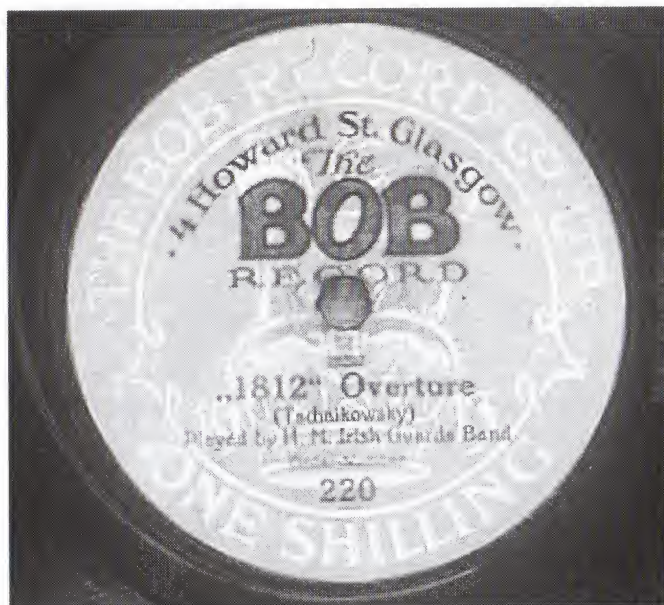
In November 1922 the "Bob-o-Link" Talking Books, were advertised in Britain, with Song Books, nos.1 and 2 at 6s.0d, each; Reading Books nos. 1 and 2 at 6s.0d. La Velle Talking Games at 4s.0d. each and La Velle Fairy Tales at 1s.6d. each, the tales being *Down in Bird-land*, *Mother Goose* and *Santa Claus*.

The wholesale distributors in Britain were the Thos. A. C. Gilbert Coy.

In February 1923, two new story books and an enlarged games book were added to the catalogue at a dollar each in the U.S.A. Victor Vhente was an additional recording artist.

From August 1923, the La Velle Mfg. Co.'s products were being sold only through the USA Music Trade. This is as far as the story goes. I do not know when the La Velle company ceased selling their product, nor when Thos. A. C. Gilbert Co. in Britain finished with the Bob-o-Link lines.

The Bob Record was a 10" double-sided disc from The Bob Record Co, Ltd., registered on July 1st 1913 as a private company with a nominal capital of £500. Its first address was 45 Renfield St. Glasgow, Scotland, but by the time its first discs were issued the address on their labels was 4 Howard St. Glasgow. A trade paper cynically remarked "there is nothing like slang for being expressive. We understand negotiations are being made to formulate the Tanner Syndicate - and then the Bankruptcy Court". The "Bob", slang for a shilling, pre-dates the arrival of the shilling records



of September 1913, but it was well known in trade circles that the coming season was to witness the introduction of bargain price records.

The Bob Record was a stencilled disc. Its source was the Berolina Schallplatten GmbH. of Berlin's matrices, as employed for the production of its British issued **Invicta Records**. Invicta Records were Berolina's export label for a number of countries.

In Britain the Invicta Record was in the hands of W. A. Barraud Ltd. from the first, but by October 1913, the commercial ties had broken down and Barraud's matrices: in Berlin were retained by the German company. There had been a legal dispute over the Invicta label as a trade mark, dating from July 1913, so it is not clear whether The Bob Record was contracted for through W. A. Barraud Ltd., or through Berolina itself. Probably the former as all "Bobs" show the same catalogue numbers as the Invicta Records and the dating codes in the wax, with M signifying 1912 and N 1913.

Some British recorded matrices which appear on **Bel Canto Records** and **Dacapo Records**, for which latter label William A. Barraud had been agent, do also appear on some Invicta Records and the Bob Record, at least, is also known which shows these other matrices.

The Bob labels were pale blue, printed white and had the design of our imperial crown in the lower half, which was surmounted by a standing lion, also wearing an imperial crown. The label name was in red. The price, One Shilling, was printed around the lower half.

The Bob Record 220, matrix 20185, was catalogued the same as the Invicta and had coded dates for November 30th 1912 with the reverse date of January 6th 1913. I played *The Barcarolle* from *The Tales of Hoffman* by Offenbach, recorded by Band of H. M. Irish Guards, with an unnamed cornet

soloist lead, who was probably Sergeant Hunt. The unnamed conductor would have been Charles Hassell, whose line portrait was to grace the **Guardsman Record** labels which were introduced by William Barraud's Invicta Record Co. in 1914.

Boosey and Hawkes Ltd. This was the label of the world-wide known company of the same name famous for its music score publications and for the manufacture of musical instruments, particularly for military concert, and brass bands. Later, the "Ltd." was dropped from their labels which had a variety of designs, colours and catalogue number prefixes. The recordings were taken for their Recorded Music Catalogues, but I have not yet discovered when the first was published. My earliest transparency of a label from Len Watts is coloured red and yellow with title and artist data in black. A logo shows a bird with outstretched wings perched on a valve-less trumpet. A "B" in the label surround indicates a **Decca Record Co.** manufacture. The matrix CP.479 puts it into Decca's private contract work and pre-dates 1941, probably in the mid-1930s.

The repertoires of the recorded music catalogues comprised compositions suitable for use by producers and directors in the entertainment industries and were not primarily recorded for sale to the general public. Each side of a disc might have only one title, or any number of titles relating to a few bars of music for each. Usually each title's playing time was printed on the label, but on the particular side I played, Cat.No. B.H. 1911, with two titles, there are no duration times.

From the 1940s both **Levy's Sound Studios Ltd.** and EMI Ltd.'s private contracting services undertook to provide Boosey and Hawkes with recordings, presumably with music from published scores or from composers under their contract, to compose specific items for clients.



The label was now entirely different from the Decca production. Boosey and Hawkes was inscribed on a banner ribbon which had folds in its length and a new logo showed a semi-quaver surmounting the world with the Atlantic Ocean prominent. A 2,000 catalogue series was begun which progressed irrespective of the prefixes and irrespective of size. The twelve-inch discs were given an extra "T" to the prefixes used. They were "M" for military or brass bands, "O" for orchestra, "Z" for string ensembles and "V" for vocal recordings; thus 12" discs had MT, OT, ST and VT.

Although yearly catalogues were published periodical supplements up-dated them. Labels seen have been in red, white and black, green, white and black, and green and silver. Except in the military and brass bands section, artists' names did not appear in the 1957 catalogue although supplements and the labels themselves do give the names. All discs seen do give the duration of play time, as does the literature. Of course, where there was more than one item per side the tracks were banded to assist the users of particular items.

At some point during the run of the series the labels were given an additional number, pre-fixed BHP for 10" and BHPX for 12" discs. In the continuing "O" numbers, OT.2429 was the highest. This was issued in December 1962, after which the January 1963 discs 2430 to 2443 showed that "Ltd." had been removed from the banner ribbon on the labels.

For a few years before this, the year of publication had been printed on the labels in the same fashion as EMI Ltd. used on its latter years of 78rpm discs. That was later replaced with an encircled "P" and date.

Numbering reached 2611 in March 1968 which was the last of the 78rpm records. Boosey and Hawkes were supplied with micro-groove recordings from then on. The last of the 78's had been pressed in vinyl.

In June 1940, Boosey and Hawkes Ltd. were advertising a personal recording service with 12" single side recordings at 30 shillings each and subsequent copies at 2 shillings each and 12" double side recordings at 50 shillings each with subsequent copies at 36 shillings each. Both Boosey and Hawkes and Levy Sound Studios were in Regent Street, London; thus it is likely that Levy's were contracted by Boosey and Hawkes. I do not know for how long Levy's made records for the music publishers before EMI Ltd. became the sole supplier, if that is what occurred.

A vinyl pressed disc was played. The sides had some pieces played by Hans Horner on a theatre organ. We heard *Coronation March* and *Angelique* composed by the theatre organists Felton Rapley and Fred-eric Bayco respectively on O.2397.

Bosworth Record. Such records were pressed for another music score publisher, presumably from extant recordings for which Bosworth and Co. Ltd owned the copyright scores. This was circa 1916/1917 at which time it was against copyright law for any copyrighter to have recordings of their scores recorded exclusively by one recording company or for one label. Other labels and companies had to have access.

These early Bosworth Record discs were pressed by **The Crystalate Manufacturing Co. Ltd.** from their Invicta Record Co. Ltd.'s Guardsman record masters. The label, in dark green and gold stated "Best Novelty Records - Ask for Lists" The purpose for their production was to act as an advertising medium for their music scores.

The discs were never mentioned in the talking machine trade magazines and if Len Watts had not collected the example displayed, their former existence may still have remained unknown. Full details of any other examples would be welcomed.

Bosworth and Co. Ltd. were at 8 Heddon Street, London W. Their disc labels mention the different types of scores of the titles on their recordings.

Bosworth Record (2). Some twenty years after the first acoustically recorded Bosworth Records had been in circulation (and I do not know for how long that was), Bosworth and Co. Ltd. again entered the scene with a new styled label for its electrically recorded discs. Again it used its own printed music scores and new works by contracted composers as the basis and the augmentation of its Record Catalogues.

It may have been around March 1937 when the first issues appeared with the discs given a BC. prefixed catalogue series starting at BC.1001. The series was mostly of orchestral type recordings and the numbering reached BC.1239, which was issued in 1959 when the prefix changed to BCV reaching BCV 1531 in 1968. Did the additional "V" indicate with vocals or made in vinyl.

It may be that the first issues were recorded for demonstrating Bosworth's catalogue of music scores, but with playing duration times appearing on later issues, recorded works must have been directed to the entertainment industries in films, musical shows and theatrical productions.

A second series of discs was begun circa 1938, starting at BD 101, the recordings being suitable use for dramatic productions.

A third series either starting at BE 1 or BE 11 was initiated circa 1940, and was devoted to cinema (theatre) organ music and a BB prefix, begun at about the same period, had recordings confined to band music.

Another series prefixed BA comprising recordings of South American musical items was also started at about the same time.

Finally a BX prefixed series was begun around 1950 the recorded titles classified as "mood music".

The records were made under contract with either the Decca Record Co. Ltd. (CP prefixed matrices) or by EMI Ltd. through EMI Studios, Ltd. (CPT prefixed matrices), recorded by the Special Recordings Dept. The EMI-made discs showed the EMI trade mark on the labels. The Decca recordings showed one of the letters from the word BUCKINGHAM in the wax, but if more than ten pressing masters were used then a combination of two letters from BB through to BH were employed.

I know of three different label colour combinations - there may be more. They were pale blue and dark blue, royal blue and gold, and red and gold.

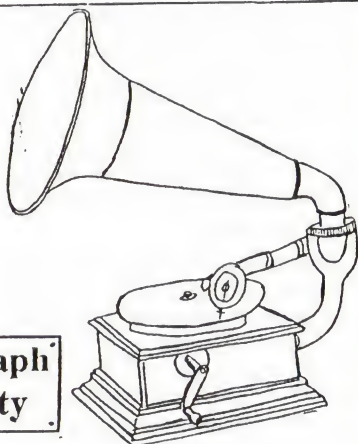
The copyright legend seen on all three was invariably printed in French as "Tout droits d'exécution et de reproduction réservés", a legend which Decca used on some of its Decca and Brunswick Ltd. labels, at one period.

BC 1142, matrix CP.943 was played in which the London Concert Orchestra played a lively march *Lady Sergeant* by Montague Ewing. This tune incorporated well-known tunes and a bugle call. The duration time was 2 minutes 56 seconds. No conductor's name was given.

To be continued

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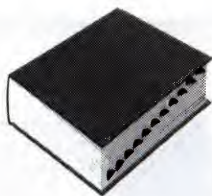
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REVIEWS



***Edison's Kinetoscope and Its Films - A history to 1896* by Ray Phillips.**

Published by Flicks Books.

ISBN 0 948911 28X, 224pp.

Price £36.95.

Ray Phillips has long been interested in Edison and the Kinetoscope. This interest began in the 1930s in London and he has restored and made replicas of these machines. He is well-qualified to write a book on this subject.

Until this book arrived on my desk I knew little about the film-making activities of Thomas A. Edison. A few years ago I had seen a Kinetoscope in The Museum of Moving Images in the South Bank in London and that was about the sum of my knowledge.

This book by Ray Phillips, one of our members, has changed all that. The book gives a detailed account of the film making activities of Edison from his early laboratory experiments up to the year 1896.

An article called *Edison's Invention of the Kinetophone* written by Antonia and W. K-L. Dickson in 1894 is reproduced. The British-born William Kennedy-Laurie Dickson was Edison's chief assistant in his early film activities and Antonia was Dickson's sister. This article gives a clear idea of what the Kinetophone (an early attempt to link film and sound) was about.

I was able to get a very firm idea on how the Kinetoscope worked. This was helped by the large selection of reproductions of contemporary photographs and illustrations, ranging from instructions on how to set up

and operate the Kinetoscope to contemporary film catalogues.

Ray Phillips has included a section on Edison's associated project, the Kinetophone. This was device which produced talking pictures. Unlike the Kinetoscope which was very successful, the Kinetophone was a commercial disaster.

One of the most valuable features of this book is an alphabetical listing of all the Kinetoscope films that Ray Phillips has found to have been made. Copies of many of them have not survived. There are stills illustrated from many of the surviving films.

This book has proved to be a mine of information and a most informative read. It will remain on my shelves as a reference source for years to come. I can heartily recommend it despite its relatively high price. Flicks Books is based in Trowbridge, Wiltshire; so the book should be available from any good bookseller. For readers in North America Greenwood Press publish an edition for sale there.

Chris Hamilton

Brass Band Cylinders and Non-microgroove Discs

by Frank Andrews

with a foreword by Trevor Herbert

As well as being a dedicated researcher in the Gramophone industry, Frank Andrews is a lifetime supporter of brass band music, and in this 'book he focuses his skills on both to produce a list of British brass band records made by earlier systems.

The first brass bands to make records were featured as Small Brass Ensembles in the early listings of Berliner 5in. discs, and a Japanese Geisha brass band certainly made a Berliner Gramophone disc and possibly others, in 1899. Indeed, the story of the brass band movement in this country

may be traced back far earlier to the second decade of the last century.

An early pair of bands, with their successors still active today, were Black Dyke Mills and Besses o' th' Barn. Besses started in military fashion as a reed band, but with the popularity of the cornet the reed bands fell before the brass, and the first all-brass band is said to be Walker's and Hardman's, brass, and the a 24 piece body of 1833.

From that time rivalries between various bands resulted in local and district competitions and to the first national contest at Belle Vue, Manchester in 1853. Almost without exception these have taken place annually to the present day, though the festival is now held in the Royal Albert Hall.

The earliest known attempt to make a series of brass band recordings was in mid-1903 with a block of 7in. G & T discs by Black Dyke, and although not all were issued they showed the way to other manufacturers and other bands, and over the years Black Dyke went on to make scores of 78-type discs and even a few cylinders for Edison Bell. Records by brass bands started to appear regularly in the catalogues from 1903.

Details are given of all known brass band recordings together with soloists, made in the United Kingdom in pre-LP days, as well as 78s that became available in Australia, Canada, Germany, Holland and the U.S.A. Salvation Army bands and soloists are given their own section.

As expected from the author, this is a well-researched discography. Attention to detail is given prime consideration - and it shows, but he is not shy in inviting information from the reader where his sources have run out, through the use of open brackets. The book comes in a large pocket-size form that the true follower of brass band music will never be far away from. The presentation of information is done with an estimated

six type sizes, making for clear layout and easy consultation.

A reference book like this deserves a long and successful career.

The book is obtainable from Piccolo Press, 10 Clifton Terrace, Winchester, SO22 5BJ, United Kingdom and costs **£11.75 post free**, or **U.\$20.00** cash, including air mail when ordered direct from publisher (no cheques or credit cards).

George L. Frow

Chansons et monologues sur les DISQUES À SAPHIR PATHÉ (1911 à 1918) by Gilbert Humbert

After Gilbert Humbert had published his book on the very first disc recordings of Pathé in his PANORAMA DES CYLINDRES ET PREMIERS DISQUES PATHÉ CHANTÉS ET PARLÉS (1898-1910) (*Hillandale News* No. 214, pages 225 to 226), he wrote and has now published this new and excellent work. M. Humbert had catalogued in his previous book the disc recordings of Pathé from the years 1911 to 1918. In this new work you can find nearly everything of the great sector of songs and spoken texts. For example you can find suites, chansons, monologues, dialogues, Tyrolese songs, and so on.

The disc recordings, which are catalogued by M. Humbert, are at first divided into two parts. On the one hand there are the titles, which were recorded between 1911 and 1916. All these disc recordings belong to the category of the Etched Label. Consequently the discs had no paper labels and all data (title, etc.) was engraved in the shellac. These discs had a speed of 90 to 95 rpm and a diameter of 29 cm. These discs must be played from the middle of the disc, for which is typical for Pathé.

On the other hand there are titles which

were published in 1917 and 1918. Those discs had paper labels depicting the cock, the typical emblem of Pathé. Normally they had a speed of 80 rpm and a diameter of 27 cm. They must be played from the edge of the disc, the same as the majority of the discs from other companies. The collector can find both pre-1917 recordings as well as later ones (from 1917-1918) on this type of record. The book specifically mentions this.

The book itself starts with the table of contents: after the introductory preface mention is made of all 87 performers and repertoire in alphabetical order. There are such well-known names like Yvette Guilbert and Charlus as well as Dranem and Felix Mayol. M. Humbert has dedicated independent books to the last two mentioned artistes. The pages are subdivided into performers and repertoire sections.

The table of contents is followed by a single-page preface in French, which contains predominant historical information and also directions for use. Those who don't understand French can use the book without any problems as with every book from Gilbert Humbert.

The work is divided into columns. Every column represents a period of time for example a year or a month of a certain year, in which the relevant disc recordings were made. If you look under repertoire then the relevant performers are named. Also under the performer you can find information about the relevant repertoire.

The book has 82 pages, which are printed on both sides. It is spiral-bound measuring 8.3" x 11.8". The book is published by the author and can be ordered only from himself. The address is **M. Gilbert Humbert, [REDACTED] Fuveau, France**. The book costs **200FF. + 6FF.** for packaging + **32FF.** for postage for Europe. Postage for USA and Canada is **44FF.** Because of high bank charges it may be more convenient for buyers from outside Europe to send the money in cash. I can again strongly recommend to you this wonderful book written by my friend Gilbert Humbert, even if you own only one disc from Pathé.

Sven Traunfelder

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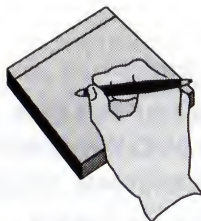
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS IN LONDON

CHANGE OF VENUE

Due to reconstruction work at the Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church we shall be meeting in the **Wynter Room** at the **Swedenborg Society, Swedenborg House, 20-21 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2TH** during the months of February, March, April, May and June 1998.

February 17th	Anthony Pollard, Chairman of Gramophone Publications Ltd., will talk on <i>75 Years of Gramophone</i> .
March 17th	Chris Hamilton will give us <i>Another Taste of Scotland</i> .
April 21st	John Passmore on <i>Enrico Caruso</i>
May 19th	Howard Hope - Title to be announced
June 16th	<i>Collectors' Choice</i>
July 21st	Allan Palmer will give a talk on <i>Ballads by Women</i>
August 18th	Frank Andrews - Full details to be announced later

LETTERS



The Englaphone

Dear Chris,
Here is a further brief footnote to the interesting correspondence about the ephemeral Englaphone. I have a table model exactly as portrayed on p.431 of the December issue. It bears various plates and transfers. In the centre of the inside of the lid there is a celluloid (?) plate bearing the Englaphone name and the words "Plays any record". On the face of the inside of the lid which faces you when you open it, there are two further plates. One is aluminium, and bears the No. 02880; the other is again perhaps celluloid, and carries the name Englaphone boldly written across the five lines of the musical stave, and the words "Entirely made in England." No doubt this was thought to be a grand selling point in 1919. Over this legend there is a silhouette of ... well... it could be Beethoven, only this would not be consistent with their advertising policy...

The speed indicator bears the words Renoplex London. The tonearm is a gooseneck, though only a vestigial gooseneck (don't shoot the copywriter Christopher) and the soundbox is of a conventional design but looks as though it is specially made for the Englaphone. The motor has indeed a crude aluminium frame, and an openwork aluminium spring barrel.

Never mind the details - how does it play? I think it performs nobly, particularly bearing in mind that the soundbox has not had a new set of gaskets since it was new in 1919.

Does anyone have a Renoplex recording attachment, and how did it work?

Yours,
Frank James, Longhope, Gloucestershire

Sir Hugh Robertson

Dear Chris,
Further to Robert Rankine's letter about Sir Hugh Robertson and the Glasgow Orpheus Choir. The choir and some of its soloists~ was featured on early Beltona records, from the 1924/5 period, both 10" and 12". Among the soloists who had items issued in their own names were:

Donald McIntyre (baritone),
Miss Boyd Steven (soprano),
George Muir,
William Smith (tenor),
Agnes Smith and
Agnes Duncan.

They were generally accompanied by Gilbert Esplin (piano).

Less well known are the following two items:

SIR HUGH ROBERTSON

Tram Car Talks with Cecil Robertson-1;
William Cameron-2.

Recorded Peckham, c.March 1932

Beltona 1821

M-14212-2 *A cup tie reprisal*

M-14213-2 *Geordie -1,-2 -*

Beltona 1822

M-14214-1 *The soliloquist*

M-14215-2 *His Master's Voice -2 -*

Incidentally, is Robert Rankine any relation to the well known folk band leader, Andrew Rankine?

Best wishes,
Bill Dean-Myatt, Sutton Coldfield,
West Midlands

Kiddie Record Label

Dear Chris,
I refer to the letter from Tony Voysey of Gloucestershire in issue 218 on the Kiddie Record Label for Kodisk.

The disc he has (no.1002 - *Old King Cole*) is No.2 in a Kiddie Record Album of 5 records from British Kodisk, 4 Ansdell Street, Kensington, London W8.

The set comprises:

1001 *Three Little Kittens* (Miss Dolly King)

1002 *Old King Cole* (Joe Brown)

1003 *Mary had a little lamb*
(Miss Alice Young)

1004 *Jack and Jill*
(Miss Dolly King and Mr W. Harrison)

1005 *Tom, Tom the piper's son*
(Mr Willie Harrison)

The reverse of each record has the appropriate colour picture.

The records are not of the best quality; the background sounds a little scratchy but the vocals are quite clear. I play them frequently on my Jetel Nursery Gramophone, much to the enjoyment of my grandchildren.

Unfortunately No.1003 is cracked so if any reader has a spare record, I would be very interested in purchasing it.

Yours sincerely,
Charles Stopani, Mannofield, Aberdeen

Long Playing Records (1)

Dear Chris,

Let us hope that Douglas Lorimer's well-timed article *A History of Long Playing Records* (issue 15, April 1997) has reminded us that many 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm vinyl discs now have an historic significance and value.

Where, I wonder, is the first LP of *The Planets Suite* on the **Nixa** label that I saved for and purchased as a teenager around 1956? Later this was lent to a fellow student who 'disappeared'. I am today left with the memory of a wonderful performance and recording and the distinctive record sleeve design based on a drawing by Doré.

Around this time I was also discovering the 8" shellac discs whose labels incorporate the words "Long Playing Record", which Douglas Lorimer mentions. I am also reminded of **The Victory 7"** discs with their noticeably finer grooves and particular sound quality, discovered in a cupboard in my grandmother's home in remote Lerwick!

None of these small electrically recorded discs struck me as long playing until I discovered a worn yet impressive example of a truly long playing disc from this era which did not bear the words "Long Playing Record" on the label!

This is the remarkable 10" "4 in 1" disc whose 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter label incorporates a 78rpm stroboscope around the circumference. The label is printed in gold on blue paper, and as the photograph shows, it was made by the British Homophone Co. Ltd. The line below this reads "Patent App. 1930". The side shown plays for an astonishing 5 minutes and 48 seconds, with no gap between the tracks. The recording covers 3 radial inches indicating that the fine groove is cut 150 grooves to the inch. It is perhaps interesting to speculate that a 12" disc with a recorded area of 4 radial inches would play for 7 minutes and 40 seconds per side! The serial numbers on the labels do not extend to double figures on the few disc in my collection, which is not, of course, proof that they were on sale for a short time.

On the relatively few undamaged examples of the "4 in 1" discs I have, the surface noise when played acoustically is low and the sound quality surprisingly good if slightly lower in volume than that of a conventional record of the period. End of side distortion is hardly apparent. Their main shortcoming, which probably led to their withdrawal and subsequent rarity, lies as one would expect in their extremely fine grooves and their spacing. Where there are passages of heavier amplitude faint echoes can often be heard as well as visible and aural evidence of wall breakdown caused by the possible combination of worn steel needles and non-compliant sound-boxes.

These surprising discs of popular music issued long before the advent and general use of compliant light-weight pickups may be seen as experiments ahead of their time and as such curiosities of today.

Can any reader reveal more about the "4 in 1" disc or supply a copy of any contemporary advertisement extolling their merits?

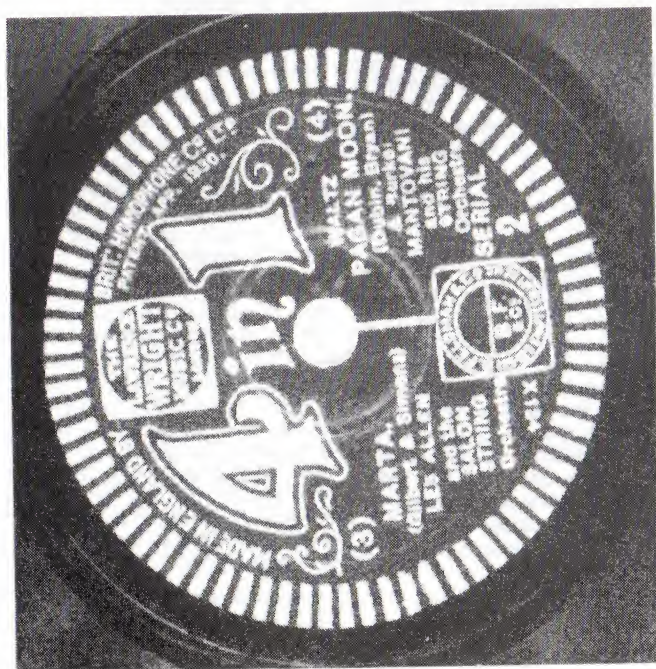
Yours sincerely,
Mark Gray, Hyndland, Glasgow

Long Playing Records (2)

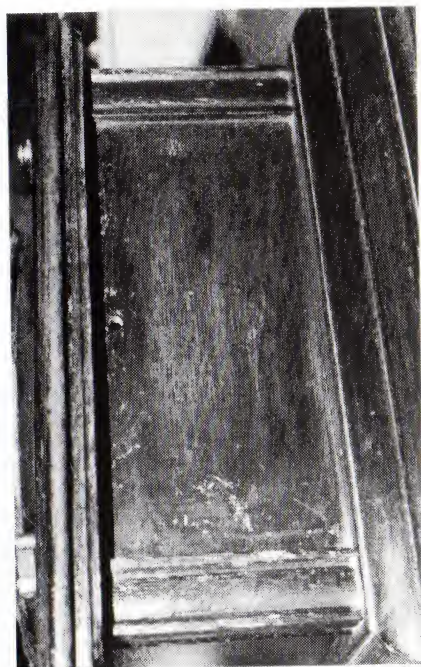
Dear Mr Hamilton,
Douglas Lorimer's article on long playing records in the April 1997 issue of *Hillandale News* implied that the Gramophone and Type-writer Ltd. developed the 10" disc. The larger disc did in fact, like its 7" predecessor, originate in the United States. Eldridge Johnson was experimenting with this size at least as early as April 1900 and made his first issue of Victor Ten Inch Records on 3rd January 1901. The story was told by Ruth Edge and Leonard Petts in *Hillandale News* nos. 156 and 157 (June and August 1987).

Now an appeal. On 2nd December 1975 Lot 128 for auction at Sotheby's Belgravia included a double-sided 7" Berliner record *I can't tell you* by A. Campbell. Albert C. Campbell made a number of recordings for Berliner in the United States, but this one is not listed in Paul Charosh's *Berliner Gramophone Records: American Issues, 1892-1900*. Moreover Charosh states that only **one**, apparently experimental, double-sided Berliner is known. Who owns the Campbell record now and what was on the other side?

Yours sincerely,
Paul Cleary, Wetherby, West Yorkshire



Mark Gray's "4 in 1"



Ian Bancroft's unknown gramophone cabinet

British Light Music

Dear Sir,

I feel that one point in Peter Cliffe's review of Philip Snowcroft's book *British Light Music* calls for comment. The reviewer takes the author to task for "erroneously" giving the name of Sir Edward German as German Edward (rather than Edward German) Jones. I do not think he is correct. In Brian Rees' biography *A Musical Peacemaker: The Life and Work of Sir Edward German* (1986) it is expressly stated that the baptismal name of the composer was German Edward Jones.

Yours faithfully,

Michael P. Walter, Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum, Tring, Herts.

Help Please

Dear Chris,

Can you or any of our members shed any light on the origin of the gramophone case shown in the photograph on page 468? The outline of the maker's transfer can be made out under the thick black shellac which I have very carefully wiped away with methylated spirit. The case is in oak, and if anyone can recognise the make is there anywhere I could get a new transfer to replace the old one?

Yours sincerely,

Ian Bancroft, Grantham, Lincs.

Moira Anderson (Soprano)

Dear Chris,

In the August issue of *Hillandale News* Peter Cliffe asked for information about the singer Moira Anderson, OBE. I have augmented the brief biographical information quoted in *Who's Who in Scotland* in the hope that it may be of interest to your readers.

Born in Kirkintilloch, Moira Anderson, aged six, joined the Kirkintilloch Junior Choir (Conductor Rev. J. R. MacPherson). This junior choir enjoyed much popularity in the West of Scotland in the years following the 1939-45 war, broadcasting with BBC Scotland and recording extensively for Parlophone. The repertoire of the choir seems to have been the mix of traditional songs and hymns one would expect from a children's choir of that period. Peter Cliffe may be interested to know that Moira Anderson made her first broadcast aged eight and that her earliest commercial recordings* probably date from her early years with the Kirkintilloch choir.

From *Who's Who in Scotland* we learn that Moira Anderson studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, Glasgow and taught music in Ayr before becoming a professional singer. She made her first professional broadcast in 1960 with the White Heather Club and has toured overseas, had her own radio and TV series and has introduced Stars on Sunday for ITV. She has appeared in numerous other stage shows including several Royal Variety Performances.

Moira Anderson recorded for Decca and, later, Lismor. Moira Anderson married Glasgow surgeon Stuart Macdonald and the couple retired from their professions some years ago.

*Kirkintilloch Junior Choir:

soloist Moira Anderson

Parlophone R3336

CE 13035-1B *Child in a Manager*
(Trad. Gaelic Air).

CE 13036-1B *Gentle Jesus*
(Martin Shaw).

*Kirkintilloch Junior Choir: Duets Joan Summers and Moira Anderson

Parlophone R3601

CE 14022 - 1A *Away in a Manger*
(Kirkpatrick).

CE 14023 - 3B *God make my life a little light* (Edwards etc)

Yours sincerely,

Robert Rankine, Alloa, Clackmannanshire

REGIONAL GROUP SECRETARIES

Clockwork Music Group

H. P. Bailey,

Tyne and Wear NE16 4ES

Midlands Group

Phil Bennett,

Wolverhampton WV6 0JW.

Tel: [REDACTED]

Northern Group

Ann Mallinson,

Barrow, Cumbria LA13 0HO

Tel: [REDACTED]

West of England Group

Paul Morris,

[REDACTED] Exeter,

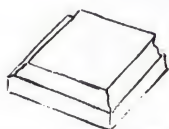
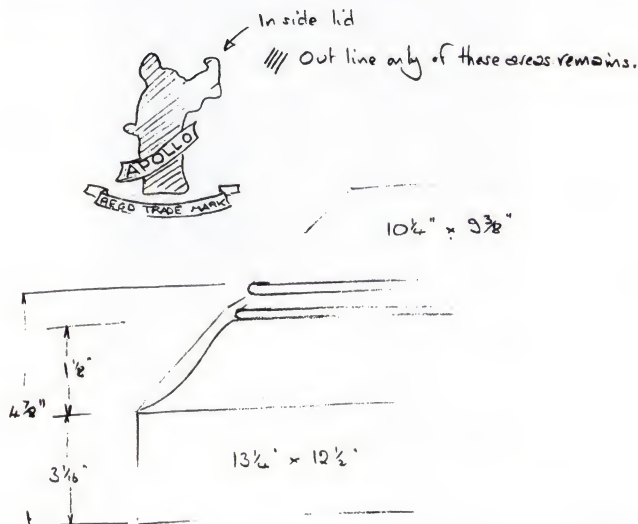
Devon EX4 4HE, Tel: [REDACTED]

Yours for the taking!

Dear Sir,
Would the lid shown below be of use to any collector? I'm not asking anything for it, but do not want it to go to a dealer to make a profit on! Obviously it would be for collection.

Regards,

Gordon Marshall, Luton. Tel: [REDACTED]



Gramophone case
lid - undamaged but
would need re-polish.

C.L.P.G.S. BOOKLIST

Cat. No. BD 12 *Restoring The Edison Gem* by Mike Field. The definite work for the restorer. Complete with full working drawings for repairing Gems. The tips and techniques are adaptable to most machines. Price including revised illustrations **£5.75 plus postage** (see **page 475** for details of postage and packing).

Revised illustrations are now available for above item *Restoring The Edison Gem* by Mike Field. They are priced at **75 pence** including postage (UK and Europe) and **£1** including postage (Rest of the World).

C.L.P.G.S. Booklist, c/o George Woolford,

[REDACTED]
Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk NR23 1RD,

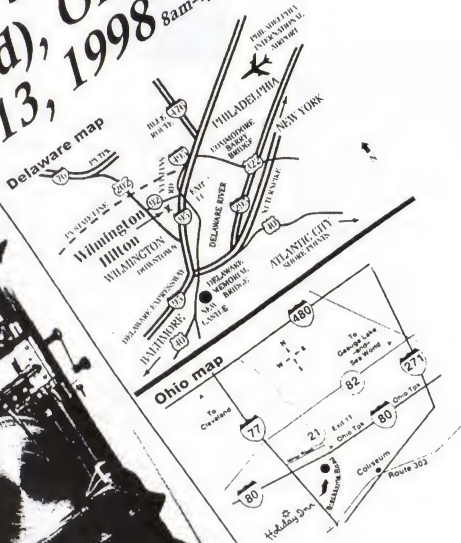
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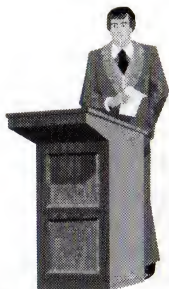
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MEETINGS



London Meeting, November 18th 1997

What's In a name? We were pleased to welcome Richard Nicholson of the Carshalton and Wallington Gramophone Society with a programme on the pseudonyms adopted by many performers for various reasons. Of the 19 examples of singers and composers none reached the centre of the stage without patrimonial adjustment, usually for contractual reasons (e.g. working for two or more companies) or perhaps where the name had an east-end clang when a sunny southern European bravado was more desirable.

While touching on the well-known (e.g. Hector Grant, aka Peter Dawson) Richard Nicholson played extracts from opera and song from people whose names most of us thought were cast in concrete from the cradle, and there were some mild shocks, but the door was opened to some pleasant and sometimes unfamiliar opera and song performed by those who were not quite what they seemed and presented by one who was on top of his subject.

Singers we heard included Marie Delna, Emilio de Gorgoza, Pauline Donalda, Alfred Piccaver, Igor Gorin, Virginia Zeana, Louis Graveure and Pilar Lorengar.

A London Correspondent

London Meeting, December 16th 1997

Bitter cold wind and problems on the London Underground did not discourage an excellent turnout for our Christmas Meeting. Hot mince pies, wine and other seasonal treats, provided by Wyn and Joyce, made the evening extra special. We were particularly pleased to welcome a number of visitors who swelled the throng to a cosy 18 in the Parlour Room.

The group had been challenged to bring along their own selection of items with the theme "Appearance can be deceptive". Needless to say, all joined in with the customary enthusiasm. Sitting in a circular forum made for an informal atmosphere and the room was quickly filled with ooh's, aah's and chuckles, escalating, on occasions, to raucous laughter interspersed with appreciative applause.

Starting the evening with a little bark (no, not Bach), canine impersonations heralded the arrival of the *Queen of Gardens*; a treasonously funny performance by Michael Bentine. We walked down the avenue and came across *The Horse the Misses dries the Clothes On* and then Billy Williams reminded us of the little boy who didn't get a visit from Santa Claus and the dulcet tones of the London Group spontaneously joined in the chorus.

A change of mood with the ever powerful Caruso and *The Coat Song*, changed yet again when the Cassey Court Kids woke up the baby before finishing up with half a pint. Sarah Walker demonstrated the wrong and the right way to sing in spite of declaring "I'm stone deaf". Is it worse than being a wrinkled prune? I wonder.

So the evening moved rapidly on with renditions from Ernest Pike, Peter Dawson, Stanley Kirkby and many more old favourites, including the Chelsea Pensioners with a marvellously mellifluous medley of music

hall merriment. Then the atmosphere chilled as Boris Karloff made a ghostly appearance in a blood curdling performance of *Count Dracula*.

Perhaps one of Frank Andrew's choices best summed up the evening. We were all good pals and jolly good company - one feature of the evening that was not deceptive. I hope we shall not wait until next Christmas before we repeat the experience.

Howard Martin

Midlands Group, November 8th 1997

Last year at our November meeting we established another "first" for our group with *Ladies Night* with two of our ladies presenting their own programmes.

This year the same two ladies, Gina Parker and Beryl Baker continued along the same lines.

Gina went on stage first with an offering entitled *Blues, Jazz and Sassy Ladies*. Her taped programme was drawn from 78s and LPs and included fourteen different items from great female individualists from the years 1927 to 1963.

We started with Bessie Smith's *Gimme a Pigfoot* from 1933. This was followed with a rare blues performance from Sweet Peace Spivey in *Double Dozens*, Victoria Spivey in *Organ Grinder Blues* and Trixie Smith in *My Daddy Rocks Me*. These recordings have amazingly outspoken lyrics for their times and are all noteworthy for fine accompanying small jazz instrumental groups.

The earliest item was the famous 1927 *Creole Love Call* by the Duke Ellington Orchestra, featuring the vocalist Adelaide Hall. On this occasion she was not singing as we understand it, but was using her voice as an instrument of the orchestra.

An impressive contribution was the 1945 version of *Lover Man* by the young Sarah Vaughan (21 years old at the time and

before she assumed her later commercial sophistication). The backing was by the then comparatively unknown be-bop pioneers Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker.

Billy Holiday, Dinah Washington, Mae West, Ella Fitzgerald, Julie London, Mary Martin and Ethel Waters were all represented, and to close Gina gave us Peggy Lee and her version of *I'm a Woman* from 1963. As Gina said "A suitable sassy piece to sign off with".

After the break Beryl Baker gave us a programme entitled *Mask Moments* from 78s, LPs and CDs. Fond memories of radio listening with her father fostered her love for a wide range of music and she then continued to reflect these memories.

Commencing with one of her father's favourites *Grenada* sung by Mario Lanza, we then heard Al Jolson in *Toot, Toot Tootsie*, Jimmy Durante in *The Lost Chord*, The Grenadier Guards Band in *King Cotton March* and contributions from Stanley Kirkby, Vera Lynn, David Whitfield and Harry Secombe.

Four of Beryl's records contained a Christmas theme (appropriate as this was the last group meeting before Christmas). We heard Gracie Fields' version of *Christmas Bells at Eventide* and then Fats Waller livened up the proceedings with *Jingle Bells*. The jazz influence continued with the 1934 Paul Whiteman Orchestra's treatment of *Christmas Night in Harlem*. Max Miller then came on with *The Christmas Dinner*.

Beryl concluded in a reflective mood by letting us hear again *Candle in the Wind*, Elton John's tribute to Princess Diana.

Both ladies received well-deserved rounds of applause for the hard work and thought put into their programmes which gave us a pleasant mixture of variety and entertainment.

We are hoping to book them again for next year.

Geoff Howl

Northern Group, November 23rd 1997

On 16th November 27 enthusiasts met at Alston Hall for the last Meeting of the Year - when they were welcomed by the Chairman Miles Mallinson.

Apologies were given from Mr and Mrs L. Jewell, Mr R. Mallinson and Mr and Mrs. M. Burns. Our Speaker for the afternoon was Mr. Aubrey Krieke, who was assisted by his wife Esta, when they gave a very interesting and detailed talk *Olé and it's not all Flamenco*, which covered the Spanish influence in many aspects of European and South American Music. It was liberally illustrated with musical excerpts from composers including: Fernando Sor, Juan Crisóstomo Arriaga ("The Spanish Mozart"), Joaquín Rodrigo, Joaquín Turina and many others, finishing with a delightful piece by Amadeo Vives.

Aubrey used, for illustrations, a sub-miniature system with all the music stored on cassette. A shoulder bag was used to carry the whole of his apparatus, including the music, tape deck, amplifier and speakers.

His talk was well received and he was duly thanked by the Chairman.

Our Annual General Meeting then began, and the Chairman gave his report, mentioning each meeting and the wide spread of topics covered during the year.

John Mills, Treasurer, gave a clear insight into our financial situation, stating that as we were in a very "healthy" state he felt that perhaps some of the excess money could be used for a "One-off" event - this will be discussed at a later date.

Officers for the coming year remain unchanged.

Chairman	Miles Mallinson
Treasurer	John Mills
Vice-Chairman	John Astin
Secretary	Ann Mallinson

Ann and Miles Mallinson and John Astin all gave notice that they would step down at the end of 1998 Session.

The Programme for the coming year was decided upon and is as follows:

22nd March	<i>Housewives Choice</i> - where our ladies can choose their Favourite Records.
17th May	<i>Music from the Movies.</i>
7th June	Joint Meeting with Midland Group
12th July	Portable Picnic
13th September	<i>Kiss Me Kate</i> and <i>British Comedians</i>
11th November	AGM and <i>Christmas Cylinders</i>

A sales table as well as a swaps table at our meetings was proposed and accepted,

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provided that the articles to be sold belong to private members of the group and that a donation of 10% of sale price be given to Society Funds.

Our next meeting on 22nd March is *Housewives Choice*, when the ladies will be given an opportunity to present their own selections of discs or cylinders. 78 disc and cylinder facilities will be available, but if anything outside this area is required, some other means of playing it must be supplied. Interested performers please contact the secretary on [REDACTED]

The annual Fee for 1997/98 remains unchanged at £5 per head as is the attendance fee of £3 per head per meeting. The annual fee is now due and should be forwarded to the Treasurer: John Mills, [REDACTED] Bacup, Lancashire L13 9NR. Cheques to be made payable to: C.L.P.G.S. (Northern Group).

Ann Mallinson

West of England Group, October 19th 1997

The Exeter home of Paul Morris was the venue for the group's autumn meeting. After time spent socialising and much partaking in much-appreciated refreshments the meeting was called to order and our host played a recorded introduction on a 'Concert' cylinder blank.

The programme was given in two parts, starting with cylinders: *The March from Tannhauser* on an Edison Concert, followed by a Lambert Concert and *Boys of the Old Brigade*. A short version of the *1812 Overture* with the Premier Military Band on a Clarion gave way to an xylophone solo with A. Benzler on a wax Amberol. The first part ended with a well-intended attempt to play *La Pauvre Lille* on a Lioret cylinder which was played on a Morris-made machine.

Part two was devoted to discs and started with *Il Trovatore Foxtrot* on a Broadcast Junior. The Trocadero orchestra in *Poet and Peasant* on a Berliner followed. The BBC celebrations were mentioned as the 2LO Military Band played *The Entry of the Gods into Valhalla* on a Winner. A Clarion vertical-cut disc with the Premier Bijou Orchestra took us into *In a Lotus Field* and *Farewell Blues* with the Campus Cut-Ups on a Diamond Disc signalled the end of a very enjoyable evening which gave great pleasure to the well-attended meeting. Further events are scheduled on the calendar.

Soundbox

C.L.P.G.S. BOOKLIST - LATEST ADDITIONS

SINCE RECORDS BEGAN - EMI The First 100 Years by Dr Peter Martland, our Chairman. Peter gives a most informative and readable account of the first 100 years of the disc recording industry in the United Kingdom. The book is full of illustrations from the EMI Archives, many of them shown to the general public for the first time. This is an essential buy for both the machine and record collector and is a snip at **£25 plus postage.**

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